



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**  
New York District

# **Jamaica Bay Marsh Islands**

## **Brooklyn, New York**

**Elders Point West Marsh Island Restoration  
Beneficial Use of Dredged Material**

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### **FACT SHEET**

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**DESCRIPTION:** Jamaica Bay is situated within the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, New York City. The Bay is about 8 miles long and 4 miles wide, covers 26 square miles, and opens into the Atlantic Ocean via the Rockaway Inlet.

The Jamaica Bay Marsh Islands are at the heart of the complex urban ecosystem of Jamaica Bay that is a part of the Gateway National Recreation Area, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. Over the past century, the Bay's fragile ecosystem has been degraded through human encroachment and increased urbanization. Combined Sewer Outfall (CSO) discharges have also exacerbated these effects. There is an existing Federally maintained navigation project within Jamaica Bay.

Local interests are alarmed at the rate in which the intertidal salt marshes on these islands are being lost. Analyses conducted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation confirmed this loss and its potentially deleterious effects on the ecosystem if the trend were to continue.

The National Park Service, Gateway National Recreation Area, convened a panel of national experts to examine the problem. This Blue Ribbon Panel concurred with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation analysis and urged immediate action on two fronts:

First, it was recommended that investigations be conducted to determine the causes of the accelerating marsh losses in an effort to formulate an effective long-term solution.

Second, it was recommended that a series of pilot projects be developed to stem further losses and re-establish habitat while long-term initiatives are being pursued.

Under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Continuing Authorities Program, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation requested assistance in implementing one or more restoration projects.

A feasibility report titled *Jamaica Bay Marsh Islands, Jamaica Bay, N.Y., Integrated Ecosystem Restoration Report, Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact* was approved in 2006, recommending restoration of three marsh islands: Elders Point East, Elders Point West and Yellow Bar Hassock.

Construction of the Elders Point East marsh island took place in 2006-2007, as mitigation for the New York & New Jersey Harbor Navigation Project. Implementation of restoration at Elders Point West and Yellow Bar Hassock has been proposed through beneficial use of dredged material from the New York & New Jersey Harbor Navigation Project per Section 207 authority and in cooperation with The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, the non-Federal sponsor.

Approximately 34 acres of salt marsh habitat is proposed for restoration at Elders Point West via placement of approximately 200,000 cubic yards of dredged material, and up to 60 acres of salt marsh habitat is proposed for restoration at Yellow Bar Hassock via placement of approximately 250,000 cubic yards of dredged material. Existing salt marsh plant hummocks are proposed to be re-planted within the new, elevated substrate.

## Jamaica Bay Marsh Islands, Brooklyn, New York

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### Elders Point West Marsh Island Restoration Beneficial Use of Dredged Material

**AUTHORIZATION:** Section 204 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1992, Public Law 102-580, as amended by Section 207 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (codified as amended at 33 U.S.C. § 2326), and as amended by Section 2037 Regional Sediment Management of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007.

**STATUS:** An Engineering Documentation Report was completed in June 2008 to update the design and cost of Elders Point West marsh island restoration. Implementation of restoration of Elders Point West is pending approval and execution of an amendment to the existing Project Cooperation Agreement for the NY & NJ Harbor Navigation Project. The amendment would incorporate this dredged material placement alternative which is not the least cost disposal alternative. Selection of this alternative is justified by the environmental benefits that the project would provide to the harbor estuary.

The New York District is also currently preparing an Engineering Documentation Report to update the design and costs for Yellow Bar Hassock marsh island restoration. Marsh island restoration projects are planned to link with source dredged material from the Anchorage and Ambrose dredging contract reaches of the NY & NJ Harbor Navigation Project.

#### **PROJECT COST:**

Estimated Total Project Cost for Elders Point West ..... \$10,600,000

#### **CONTACT:**

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